

HOUSE NEEDS A NEW HOME



PHOTO BY HEATHER KIBBEE

Currently housing the city's building department, this two-story home was once inhabited by early Camas pioneer Daisy Carmack.



Above: The wedding of Daisy's son, James Carmack, was held in the Fourth Avenue house in 1946.

Right: Daisy Carmack, pictured here in 1910, helped to bring the women's liberation movement to Camas in the early 1900s.

Photos courtesy of Sally Alves



Future of the 'Pebble House' is uncertain

By Heather Kibbee
Post-Record staff

For good reason, the tiny English-style cottage at the corner of Northeast Fourth Avenue and Northeast Everett Street is known as "the pebble house."

Encrusted with thousands of tiny stones of bright blue, red, yellow and green, the exterior of the home, once owned by early pioneer Daisy Carmack, became a treasure chest for her grandchildren during their visits in the 1940s.

At the end of a trip to Grandma Daisy's, the youngsters would point out their favorite gem and she would use a knife to gently pry the treasure from the cement—the stone would be carried home as special tokens of time spent at grandma's.

Sixty years later, tiny rocks remain, but this architecturally unique piece of local history is in danger of being destroyed.

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Pebble house

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The home, which has housed the Camas Building Department for the past 10 years, along with another located just behind it on Fifth Avenue, must be removed in order to make way for construction of the new addition to the Camas Public Library. When the city put the homes out for bid in June, there were no takers.

While the official bidding period closed July 5, city officials still hope that someone will come forward.

"At this point, we are negotiating with anyone that might have an interest," Camas Engineering Manager Eric Levison said. "If I could have done it over, I would have started this process earlier. We are going to try to work for about the next month-and-a-half to see what

we can do."

Unique History

The pebble house's former occupants are almost as unique as the structure itself.

According to former Camas resident and local historian Sally Alves, well-respected builder Claude Knapp constructed the two-story, 1,700 square-foot cottage on Fourth Avenue in the 1930s for Mayor James Duvall.

Daisy Carmack moved into the home in 1944 following the death of her husband, Robert Wiley Carmack.

While her husband was known as a serious businessman who helped to shape the commerce of Camas—first as a grocer and later as a real estate agent—Daisy had her own agenda.

Described as a "high-spirited,

spunky" woman, Daisy carved her own niche in local history.

An early supporter of the women's liberation movement, in the 1920s and 1930s, she picketed the steps of Camas City Hall in support of women's right to vote.

Through her research, which included interviews with family members, Alves learned that after Daisy moved into the Fourth Avenue home she became quite infamous for the weekly canasta games she hosted during which she and her friends would smoke forbidden cigarettes and drink "tea."

She lived in the pebble house until her death in 1955.

The history of the second home that must be moved, located at 616 N.E. Fifth Avenue, is a little less clear.

The single-story, 1,000 square-foot house with its invit-

ing front porch, hardwood floors, unique fireplace and built-in shelves, also has its own unique character.

It was purchased by the city from Roger and Rosemary Knapp, Robert and Kim Lewis and Shawn and Melanie MacPherson in January to make room for the library expansion.

Time is of the essence

Both of the homes were put out to bid in early June, with the understanding that transplanting expenses would be paid by the buyer.

Levison said so far, the only interest the city has received regarding the homes were from people wanting to take parts of it. However, the city would prefer if the homes were kept in one piece.

"We want the houses to stay

intact," he said.

According to Clement Ogilby, a historic structure specialist working for Clackamas, Ore., based structure moving company Emmert International, removal of the Carmack house would cost in the range of \$38,000 to \$45,000 and take up to two weeks to prepare for removal. The Fifth Avenue house transplant would carry a price tag of \$25,000 to \$28,000 and take five to 10 days to prepare.

Preferably, the purchaser would have a piece of property open and available, however, he did say that if need be the city could attempt to find a place to store the homes for up to 90 days.

The city would require that whomever bids on either of the homes obtain the services of a licensed contractor to move the home, and provide insurance

and a bond.

Levison said the city would do whatever it could to expedite the permitting process for the purchasers of the homes.

With less than 90 days before preparations for the library construction must begin, according to Levison, time is of the essence.

"We are in a very tight timeline, we have to have the houses off the sites by Oct. 1," he said. "If we can't find a home for the homes we are going to have to tear them down to make room for the library."

For more information on purchasing the homes, contact Levison at 834-6864.